



Choose Garden Site

- sunny location
- good soil drainage (no standing water in rainy seasons)
- at least 10 foot x 6 foot area for two bushes
(add 6 feet in width for each additional bush)
- if growing in containers: at least 24" wide and 16" deep per bush

Other considerations:

You will need a minimum of two varieties of blueberry bushes (three or more are ideal), so choose the size of your site accordingly.

All varieties except the lowbush require 5-6 feet between bushes. (Lowbush varieties are grown in colder climates and need less space. These are also well-suited for containers.)

Keep bushes away from buildings that will cast too much shade, and keep them away from other trees and bushes that will make them compete for water and nutrients.



Location ideas:



Test Soil

- test soil using a home soil test or by sending it to a lab for analysis
- pH should be between 4.0 and 5.5
- If the pH is above 5.5, then amend the soil in step 4
- OR plant in containers

Other considerations:

If rhododendrons grow well in your area, your soil is likely acidic; however for blueberries a soil test is always recommended.



My soil's pH:



Finalize Location

- Based on your soil's pH and the other factors listed in Step 1, decide on your blueberry bushes' location.
- They will likely grow for years (or decades!) so choose wisely!
- If planting in containers, obtain pots at least 24" wide and 16" deep.



My blueberry bushes' location is:

.....

.....

.....

.....



Amend the Soil

- Clear the planting site of weeds and grasses.
- If the pH is in the correct range, spread peat moss, pine needles, dry oak leaves, and/or other organic matter on the planting area and mix in to a depth of 1-2 feet.
- If the pH is above 5.5, sprinkle pelletized sulfur (do not use aluminum sulfate) on top of planting area. For each 100 square-foot area, add the following amounts for each 1-point you wish to lower your pH.
 - 3/4 pound for sandy soil
 - 1.2 pounds for loam soil
 - 1.5 pounds for clay soil
- If planting in containers, obtain peat moss and a well-draining soil (like unfertilized potting soil). Combine half of each and fill your containers.

How I will amend my soil:





My Blueberry Planting Workbook

5

Purchase Bushes

- Shop for bushes first from your local nursery. If you purchase from a non-local supplier, decide on which type to grow, based on your zone:

Zones 3-7: Lowbush (best for cold areas and higher elevations)

Zones 4-7: Northern Highbush (best for north, midwest, northwest)

Zones 6-10: Rabbiteye (best for south, south-central US)

Zone 7-10: Southern Highbush (best for deep south, FL, CA)

- As you can see, many zones can technically grow more than one type; that's why it's recommended to check with your local nursery. With the exception of Lowbush, the other types grow to 5-6 feet or larger and produce much fruit. Lowbush grow to about 1 foot tall and can be planted closer together.
- Purchase at least two different cultivars from the same type to ensure proper pollination.



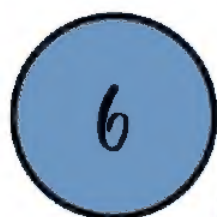
Which type and cultivars I will grow:

.....

.....

.....

.....



Plant Bushes

- If planting in the ground, set bushes on top of the ground 5-6 feet apart to ensure their proper placement on the site (lowbush should be placed 1 foot apart from one another).
- Dig a hole and plant bushes at container depth (for containers, plant the same way).
- Add a 1-gallon bucket of peat moss to planting hole. Water deeply, and continue to water every other day (as needed) for a few weeks; after that, ensure they receive 1" per week of irrigation or rainfall throughout the first season.
- Apply a thick mulch of pine needles or wood chips.

Timing: Potted plants can be planted anytime the ground isn't frozen. Bare-root plants should be planted in the spring (or fall for the south).

If plants have blooms when you get them, pinch them off.

For containers, move pots to an unheated shelter when temperatures get below freezing.

Date & locations I planted my bushes:

.....

.....

.....

